

Lehman Caves National Monument

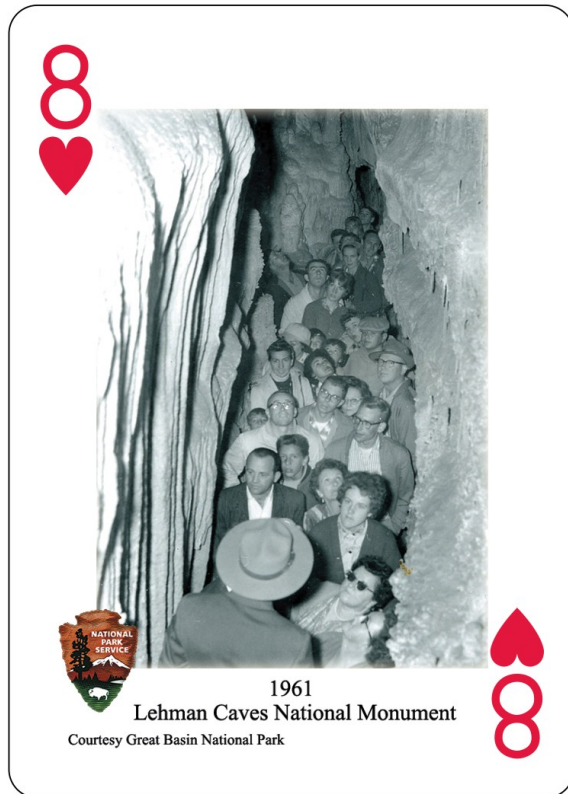
Great Basin National Park

President Warren G. Harding declared Lehman Caves a National Monument on January 24, 1922. It was dedicated in a grand celebration on August 6 that involved the American Legion, the mayor of Baker, and local schoolchildren.

An Executive Order, signed by President Franklin Roosevelt on June 10, 1933, transferred control of all national monuments, including Lehman Caves, to the National Park Service. During the next decade, several cleanup, rehabilitation, and repair projects were conducted in the cave and on the surface by New Deal agencies such as the Works Progress Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the Civil Work Administration.

The first electrically lit cave tours began in April 1941. The complicated system was difficult to maintain, though, and had frequent failures. It was not until 1949, when new reliable generators were installed, that continuous cave lighting was assured.

In 1955, a long-term action plan designed to improve and develop facilities at this Monument and across the Nation's system of National Parks, while fully protecting resources, was inaugurated and dubbed "Mission 66." The plan was to implement these goals nationwide by the 50th anniversary of the National Park Service, which would be celebrated in 1966. At Lehman Caves National Monument over \$500,000 was spent on improvements. Additional employee housing, a visitor center (the current Lehman Caves Visitor Center), power plant, utility building, several thousand feet of new road, a 25-unit picnic area, and new utilities systems were constructed. Trails inside the cave were refurbished, and additional cave elements were added to the regular tour. By 1966, annual visitation to Lehman Caves National Monument increased to 31,000 visitors.



For more information on the Lehman Caves National Monument please visit:

<http://www.nps.gov/grba/historyculture/lehman-caves-history.htm>

